

Message Text

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ORIGIN L-03

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TO AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM IMMEDIATE
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 277996

FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG FROM LEONARD AND HELMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, UN, SW

SUBJECT: SWEDISH PROPOSAL ON INCENDIARIES

REF: STOCKHOLM 4929

1. APPRECIATE YOUR REPORT OF CONVERSATIONS WITH BLIX DESCRIBED IN REFTEL. OUR INFORMATION ON POSITION OF USSR AND WESTERN ALLIES IS DIFFERENT FROM THAT GIVEN TO YOU BY BLIX. USUN REPORTED THURSDAY THAT SOVIETS HAD ALREADY INFORMED SWEDEN THAT THEY WOULD ASK FOR A VOTE AND ABSTAIN, AND THAT UK, FRANCE AND FRG ALSO HAD DECIDED TO ABSTAIN. BASED ON THIS INFORMATION, USUN RECOMMENDED ABSTENTION AND WE CONCURRED. WE HAVE CHECKED WITH THE USSR AND UK
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THIS AFTERNOON, AND THEIR INTENTIONS HAVE NOT CHANGED.

2. WE HAVE PARTICIPATED ACTIVELY IN INTERNATIONAL WORK ON CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS, AND SUPPORT THE CONTINUATION OF THIS WORK IN ANY APPROPRIATE FORUM. WE HAVE INDICATED OUR WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT REASONABLE RESTRICTIONS ON MINES, BOOBY-TRAPS, FRAGMENTS NOT DETECTABLE BY X-RAY, AND ON THE

USE OF INCENDIARIES IN POPULATED AREAS. HOWEVER, WE SHARE CONCERNS OF SOVIETS AND WESTERN ALLIES ABOUT PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONTINUATION OF THIS WORK. NEITHER EASTERN NOR WESTERN MILITARY POWERS COULD ACCEPT A

SITUATION WHERE DECISIONS TO PROHIBIT OR SEVERELY RESTRICT IMPORTANT WEAPONS IN THEIR CONVENTIONAL ARSENALS (SUCH AS INCENDIARIES, M-16S, CLUSTER BOMBS, MINES, ETC.) WERE BEING TAKEN BY MAJORITY VOTE OF NON-ALIGNED WITHOUT THE CONSENT OF MAJOR MILITARY POWERS. THEREFORE WE HAVE THOUGHT IT IMPORTANT TO STRUCTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR FURTHER WORK SO THAT DECISIONS WOULD IN PRACTICE BE TAKEN BY CONSENSUS.

3. ALTHOUGH WE DID NOT EXPECT THAT NON-ALIGNED WOULD ACCEPT EXPLICIT STATEMENT IN RESOLUTION THAT RULE OF CONSENSUS WOULD APPLY IN PREPARATORY COMMITTEE SESSIONS, WE DID ASK FOR SOME SATISFACTORY EVIDENCE IN EITHER THE RESOLUTION OR THE STATEMENTS OF THE COSPONSORS TO GIVE US ASSURANCE THAT CONSENSUS WOULD IN FACT BE OBSERVED. ON MORE THAN ONE OCCASION, WE THOUGHT WE HAD WORKED OUT APPROPRIATE FORMULAS WITH THE SWEDES TO GIVE US THIS ASSURANCE, BUT IN EACH CASE THE SWEDES INFORMED US THAT THE NON-ALIGNED WOULD NOT AGREE. IN THE END, WE WERE FACED WITH A RESOLUTION WHICH APPEARS TO CONTEMPLATE AN ORDINARY UN CONFERENCE FRAMEWORK (WITH AN INVITATION
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FORMULA WHICH WILL INCLUDE THE PLO AND OTHER NON-GOVERNMENTS), AND BY THE CO-SPONSORS' REFUSAL TO GIVE ANY ADEQUATE STATEMENTS INDICATING THAT CONSENSUS WOULD IN PRACTICE APPLY.

4. WE THEREFORE CONCLUDED THAT WE SHOULD JOIN THE SOVIETS AND OUR WESTERN ALLIES IN AN ABSTENTION. HOWEVER, WE INTEND TO CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS TO WORK OUT A SUITABLE FRAMEWORK FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THIS WORK, SO THAT THE END RESULT WILL BE AN EFFECTIVE AND WIDELY ACCEPTABLE SET OF WEAPONS RESTRICTIONS HAVING REAL HUMANITARIAN BENEFIT.

5. FYI: VOTE ON RESOLUTION HAS BEEN POSTPONED UNTIL NEXT WEEK (PROBABLY NO EARLIER THAN TUESDAY). VANCE

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Sent Date: 19-Nov-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
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